

March 23, 2017

Good Afternoon Co-Chairs: Senator Boucher, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann and other members of the Education Committee. My name is Michael Hann. I live in Stafford Springs, Connecticut. I am in support **House Bill 7254: An Act Requiring Special Education Teachers to Complete a Program of Study in Evidence-Based Structured Literacy Interventions for Students with Dyslexia.**

Our Special Education Teachers should receive the required training that will support all struggling readers. HB 7254 calls for a "Program of Study" in Dyslexia, for Special Educators within Institutes of Higher Education, which is needed. I was amazed to find out this was not already a requirement. Districts should not have to pay for this training, this should be taught in college.

HB 7254 aligns teacher preparation for special educators with evidence-based structured literacy, along with a requirement for supervised practicum hours, which is critical. This has been proven to work with Dyslexic students and all struggling readers.

HB 7254 will allow special Education teachers to receive Dyslexia training as pre-service teacher candidates, before they graduate and reach our local school districts. HB 7254 is essential to meet the critical needs of students with Dyslexia.

**I myself have struggled with dyslexia and learning disabilities my whole life and still struggle to read and write today. In middle and high school, I would act out so I could be put in detention so I didn't have to read out-loud in front of the class. There were no programs available to me, no one identifying my need for help, and no teachers with specialized training. I asked on occasion for help reading in private with teachers and received no support. I can see in my adult life now that something like HB 7254 was crucial to my ability to succeed and prosper in Connecticut. To make a deeper point, I had to have my partner help me write my story for you so I could also have a voice. I hope that children today will have the opportunity to receive an education no matter what their ability, so they can have just as much of a chance for success as others it comes so easily to. Thank you for helping to make this a reality for the future.**

As a resident in the State of Connecticut, I request your support of the Dyslexia legislation.

Respectfully,  
Michael Hann  
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